

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

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51

ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 /026 W

----- 034527

P 031732Z JUN 75

FM AMEMBASSY BONN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 0502

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 BONN 08901

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: CASC, CU, US

SUBJECT: PRISONER EXCHANGE

REF: STATE 118045

1. MEEHAN SAW VOGEL IN BONN JUNE 1. VOGEL CONFIRMED, ON THE BASIS OF INFORMATION RECENTLY RECEIVED FROM CUBA, THAT HIS SIDE WAS WILLING TO GO AHEAD WITH THE LUNT-THOMPSON DEAL AND WAS INTERESTED IN DISCUSSING ARRANGEMENTS FOR RELEASE OF THE PRISONERS.

2. VOGEL SAID THE CUBANS HAD SUGGESTED AN ARRANGEMENT (WHICH HE HIMSELF CONSIDERED UNNECESSARILY DRAMATIC) TO EXCHANGE THE TWO MEN AT SEA SOMEWHERE BETWEEN CUBA AND THE FLORIDA COAST. ALTERNATIVELY, THE CUBANS WOULD BE WILLING TO GIVE AN AMERICAN AIRCRAFT PERMISSION TO LAND IN CUBA TO PICK UP LUNT. VOGEL FAVORED AN ARRANGEMENT UNDER WHICH HE WOULD PICK UP LUNT IN CUBA AND DELIVER HIM TO A DESTINATION OF US CHOICE, FOR EXAMPLE NEW YORK. HE WOULD THEN PROCEED TO LEWISBURG TO PICK UP THOMPSON AND RETURN WITH HIM TO THE GDR. (COMMENT: VOGEL MADE IT CLEAR HIS SIDE WANTS TO GET THOMPSON OUT OF THE US AND BACK TO THE GDR AS SOON AS POSSIBLE AFTER RELEASE. OTHERWISE, HE SAID, THERE WAS A RISK THAT THOMPSON WOULD START TALKING TOO MUCH, AND THIS MIGHT BE EMBARRASSING. END COMMENT)

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3. VOGEL SAID HE DID NOT THINK HIS SIDE WOULD WANT TO BRING THE SWISS EMBASSY IN HAVANA INTO THE LUNT RELEASE ARRANGEMENTS. NOR DID HE THINK GDR, CZECH OR OTHER SOVIET/EE EMBASSIES WOULD WISH TO PLAY A ROLE IN THOMPSON'S RELEASE.

4. VOGEL SAID THAT WHEN WE WERE AT THE POINT OF PROCEEDING TO THE RELEASE OF THE PRISONERS, HE WOULD WISH TO HAVE A WRITTEN EXCHANGE ON THE SUBJECT. HE WOULD GIVE US A STATEMENT, SIGNED BY HIM, TO THE EFFECT THAT HE WOULD PICK UP LUNT ON A CERTAIN DATE AND DELIVER HIM TO A GIVEN DESTINATION. WE SHOULD BE PREPARED TO GIVE HIM A CORRESPONDING STATEMENT, WHICH COULD BE SIGNED BY MEEHAN OR ANYONE ELSE WHOM WE WOULD AUTHORIZE, TO THE EFFECT THAT THOMPSON WOULD BE RELEASED ON THE DATE ON WHICH VOGEL MIGHT PROCEED TO MEET WITH HIM AT LEWISBURG.

5. MEEHAN SAID HE WOULD REPORT AND BE BACK IN TOUCH, NOTING THAT HE WOULD BE IN THE US FOR TWO WEEKS BEGINNING JUNE 7. IF THERE WERE ANY DEVELOPMENTS BEFORE HIS RETURN TO EUROPE, SOMEONE FROM THE EMBASSY WOULD BE IN TOUCH WITH VOGEL.

6. REQUEST INSTRUCTIONS.

7. DURING JUNE 1 MEETING VOGEL GAVE MEEHAN A SEEMING ORIGINAL (TYPEWRITTEN, UNSIGNED) LETTER DATED MAY 6 FROM THOMPSON TO VOGEL AND STANGE, WEST BERLIN LAWYER WITH WHOM VOGEL WORKS ON PRISONER DEALS. THE LETTER CONVEYS THAT THOMPSON'S LATEST PAROLE APPLICATION HAD BEEN REJECTED AND CONTINUES: BEGIN TEXT

AS YOU PROBABLY KNOW, LAST NOVEMBER, MY OLDEST SON WROTE ME THAT HE WAS TIRED OF THE WAY THAT THE DIPLOMATS HAD ACCOMPLISHED EXACTLY NOTHING IN ALL THESE YEARS, AND THAT HE TOLD ME AT THAT TIME, THAT HE WAS GOING TO THE WEST, AND WAS GOING TO KILL A U.S. DIPLOMAT OR OTHER OFFICER, AND THEN SEND WORD TO THE PRESS, THAT EVERYWHERE IN THE WORLD THAT AN AMERICAN OFFICER OR DIPLOMAT WAS AT, #THAT THEY WERE ALL HIS HOSTAGES, AND THAT ONE WOULD DIE AT SHORT INTERVALS, UNTIL I WAS CONFIDENTIAL

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RELEASED. WELL AS YOU KNOW, I WAS ABLE TO DELAY HIM STARTING THIS ACTION, AND RECEIVED HIS PROMISE THAT HE WOULD NOT COMMENCE ACTION UNTIL THE FIRST OF JUNE, OR IMMEDIATELY IF I WAS DENIED RELEASE BEFORE THEN.

AS YOU REALIZE, MY SON WAS LAST HEARD FROM IN

NOTE BY OC/T: SECTION 1 OF 2 BONN 8901; #PARA. 7. AS RECEIVED.
CORRECTION/CONFIRMATION TO FOLLOW.

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ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 /026 W

----- 034562

P 031732Z JUN 75

FM AMEMBASSY BONN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 0503

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 02 OF 02 BONN 08901

EXDIS

SWEDEN, AND THERE IS NO DOUBT IN MY MIND THAT THE BOARD OF PAROLE HAS SIGNED THE DEATH WARRANT OF MANY AMERICANS, AND I REALLY DON'T CARE AT THIS POINT, AS I HAVE PAID A HELL OF A PRICE TO THE AMERICANS NOW, AND THEY WANT STILLMORE. I WILL NOT CALL MY SON OFF NOW, AS HE HAS EVERY RIGHT TO WANT HIS FATHER HOME, AND AS HE SAID IN HIS LETTER, THAT THE PALESTINE LIBERATION MOVEMENT HAD MADE A MISTAKE IN MUNICH, AND THAT HE WAS NOT GOING TO MAKE THE SAME MISTAKE, HE WOULD MAKE ALL OF THE AMERICANS HOSTAGE, IRREGARDLESS IF THEY ARE MEN WOMEN OR CHILDREN, AS FORCE IS THE ONLY TOOL THAT THE U.S. UNDERSTANDS, AND LEADERSHIP WISE, THEY ARE A NATION OF COWARDS, ALTHOUGH I HAVE MET MANY GOOD PEOPLE AMONG THE MASSES, THE MASSES ARE NOT THE ONES SLATED TO PAY THEIR LIVES IN THIS INSTANT ACTION.....

I SUGGEST THAT THE DIPLOMATS OF BOTH COUNTRIES RATHER ALLTHREE, GET TOGETHER, AND HAVE THE BOARD OF PAROLE RECONSIDER THEIR ARBITRARY AND CAPRICIOUS DECISION, IT CAN BE CHANGED BY THEM AT ANY TIME, BUT IT WOULD PROBABLY SAVE SOME LIVES IF IT WAS DONE BEFORE THE FIRST OF JUNE. AS YOU REALIZE, I NOW HAVE NO ADDRESS FOR MY SON, OTHER THAN IN JANUARY HE WAS IN SWEDEN, AND WAS USING A WEST GERMAN PASSPORT IN ANOTHER NAME, I HAVE NO IDEA HOW HE LEFT THE D.D.R., BUT HE DID STATE THAT HE WOULD BE HOME AS SOON AS I WAS

RELEASED AND WAS BACK HOME IN THE D.D.R. I FULLY
REALIZE THAT THE FOREIGN SERVICE MUST DISCLAIM ALL
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RESPONSIBILITY FOR HIS ACTIONS, AND THE ONLY REASON I
AM WRITING YOU IS THE HOPE THAT EITHER THE FOREIGN
SERVICE CAN DISSUADE HIM, OR TAKE WHATEVER ACTION WILL
MAKE IT UNNECESSARY FOR HIM TO CONTINUE HIS PRESENT
COURSE. END TEXT

8. VOGEL SAID HIS SIDE HAD NO WAY OF JUDGING THOMPSON'S
STATEMENTS (QUOTED IN THE PRECEDING PARAGRAPH), BUT HE
THOUGHT WE WOULD WANT TO BE AWARE OF THEM. HE HAD
BEEN UNABLE TO FIND OUT WHO THOMPSON'S "OLDEST SON" WAS.
SPECIFICALLY, HE HAD NOT REPEAT NOT BEEN ABLE TO LOCATE
AN "OLDEST SON" IN THE GDR WHO HAD LEFT FOR SWEDEN IN
POSSESSION OF A WEST GERMAN PASSPORT UNDER AN ASSUMED
NAME (PRESUMABLY OTHER THAN THOMPSON). VOGEL NOTED THE
EXCITED TONE OF THOMPSON'S LETTER AND WONDERED IF HE
WAS NOT INVENTING A YARN TO ATTRACT ATTENTION. IN
THESE DAYS OF ATTACKS ON EMBASSIES AND DIPLOMATIC
PERSONNEL, HOWEVER, VOGEL FELT HE SHOULD ALERT US. HE
SAID HE WOULD BE INTERESTED IF WE COULD THROW ANY LIGHT
ON THOMPSON'S STATEMENTS. VOGEL DID NOT SAY WHEN OR
HOW HE HAD RECEIVED THOMPSON'S LETTER, BUT WE GATHER
THERE IS REGULAR CORRESPONDENCE BETWEEN THE TWO.
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